

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL Lesson

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D.
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Lesson for December 5

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THE SIN OF COVETOUSNESS

LESSON TEXT—Exodus 20:17; Luke 12:15.
GOLDEN TEXT—Thou shalt not covet
anything that is thy neighbor's—
Exodus 20:17.

The Ten Commandments (the last
one of which we study today) are
characterized by their brevity, their
comprehensive touch with all of
life, and fidelity to the right. But
they are also unique and different
from all other laws in that they
reach into the inner recesses of a
man's heart, a realm where only
God can judge and act.

This last commandment (against
covetousness) emphasizes that point,
for it does not expressly require or
forbid any act, but deals with the
motive of man's action. Man can
change another man's acts, but he
cannot judge his motives, desires, or
thoughts. God must do that.

But man can, by the grace of God,
control his motives; and hence we
have this commandment and its in-
terpretation.

I. The Sin—Covetousness (Ex.
20:17).

It may be a surprise to many to
learn that coveting—or desiring what
belongs to another—is a sin. It has
become one of the "respectable
sins" accepted in the best circles
and practiced by many church peo-
ple.

As a matter of fact, this sin un-
derlies all the other sins against
which the commandments speak. He
who has a love for money and an
evil desire to have his neighbor's
possessions will hate, lie, steal,
cheat, kill, in fact, as Dr. Morgan
says, "The whole realm of human
interrelations is disorganized and
broken up by the dishonoring of the
tenth commandment."

If you have become a lover of
money, or one who longs to have
what your friends own, beware. You
are in real danger.

II. The Result—A Ruined Life
(Luke 12:15-21).

To have such a spirit makes a
man greedy (vs. 15), callous and
selfish (vs. 17-19), and foolish (v. 20),
both regarding this life and that
which is to come.

The yardstick of success in the
world—for an individual, an organiza-
tion, or a nation; yes, even for
many a church—is the possession of
wealth, or property, or other
"things." Write it in large letters
on the hearts and minds of our boys
and girls. "A man's life consisteth
not in the abundance of the things
which he possesseth" (v. 15).

The one who was known to his
friends (and to himself) as "a rich
man" (v. 16), but whom God knew
as a "fool" (v. 20), had more than
he could use for himself. He had
to build new and bigger barns, and
could not see the "barns" that were
already prepared, for, as Ambrose
says, "Thou hast barns—the bosoms
of the needy, the houses of widows,
the mouths of orphans and infants."

He was a fool who loved money for
himself. One wonders what he had
to say for himself when that very
night he was called into the pres-
ence of God to give an account of
his stewardship (v. 20). If you are
similarly situated and have the
same attitude, what will you say in
that day?

An important point which we
must note is that Jesus expressly
reprobated the connecting of His
name with the so-called "social gos-
pel" in His reply (v. 14).

III. The Cure—Trust in God (Luke
12:22-25).

Because covetousness destroys the
best in life, we ought to shun it like
poison. The best antidote (or cure)
if we have been poisoned by it is
to go all-out in our trust and con-
fidence in God.

We who are children of God are
to take no anxious thought for the
morrow. This does not forbid prop-
er preparation and forethought, but
it does rule out fretful anxiety. The
reasons are very clear and cogent.

First of all, while food and cloth-
ing are important, they are not of
first importance. The vital thing is
that one have life. Otherwise things
are useless (v. 25). We must keep
our sense of proportion, of relative
values.

Then too, God is the One who must
care for every one of us. And He
does care for us! Why not trust
Him? He cares for all creation;
can He not care for you? If then
you trust the all-powerful One, what
occasion is there for worry, or cov-
etousness?

And finally comes the devastating
argument—Worry never accom-
plished anything. Anxiety does not
help anyone, anytime, anywhere. So
why be anxious?

It is clear then that a desire for
that which belongs to others is a
sin which destroys man's happiness
and usefulness. It is needless—as
is all anxiety—because only God can
provide, and He will provide if we
trust Him.

Life becomes simple, pleasant, use-
ful, confident, yes, really Christian,
when we get our eyes on things and
on the Lord.

Spout Spring

Spout Spring, Nov. 30.—Visitors
in the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. A.
Wooten, Thanksgiving were her fa-
ther, W. H. Williamson, and Mrs.
W. L. Williamson and family, of
Appomattox, also her brother, W. A.
Phelps and Mrs. Phelps, of Roun-
dake, and uncle, T. A. Turner, and
Mrs. Turner, and Mrs. Nannie Turn-
er, all of Lynchburg. Also Mr. and
Mrs. Claude Jennings and daugh-
ters, Mrs. Emory Jennings and Mr.
and Mrs. T. W. Wooten and son, all
of Spout Spring.

Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Moore and
family, of Concord Depot, spent Sun-
day with Mr. and Mrs. Claude Jen-
nings.

Mrs. Emory Jennings and Alice
Jennings are sick at this writing.

Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Jennings and
son and Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Moore
and Ernest Brown, of Concord De-
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9 out of 10

people should carry
more fire insurance.
In case of Emergency
HAVE YOU ENOUGH?
J. A. Burke & Co.
General Insurance Agents
Appomattox, Va.

Bethany, Nov. 30.—Mrs. Jack
Moore and daughter, of Portsmouth
were visiting her parents, Mr. and
Mrs. R. J. Paulette.

Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Harvey visit-
ed in the home of Mrs. Sue Har-
vey Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Puckett and
daughter and Mrs. Katie Allen visit-
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PAPER USED IN WAR

Paper is used in the production
of many weapons of war: bomb
bands, wing tips, parachute flares,
fuse link linings, practice bombs,
airplane signals and shell contain-
ers.

Domestic production of wood-
pulp will be less than 9 million tons
as compared to over 10 million tons
used by the U. S. in 1942. A further
decline is anticipated for 1944.

Send in news copy by Tuesday of
each week.

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WAR BONDS

More and more our armies are
being fed by regular troops by par-
tisan fighters, disrupting enemy lines,
cutting communications, and paying a
heavy price in casualties.

Silken finances and their subse-
quent losses are fast passing from the
market to provide safe landings for
our distant fighting men. We can still
buy them and nylon for them with
War Bonds and Stamps.

U. S. Treasury Department

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THE

First National Bank
of Lynchburg
OFFICERS
J. D. Owen, President
J. E. Noel, Jr., Vice-President
J. L. Jones, Treasurer
J. L. Nicholas, Cashier
L. W. Horton, Assistant Cashier
S. D. Morrisett, Assistant Cashier
RESOURCES: TEN MILLION DOLLARS
Member: Federal Reserve System, Federal Deposit Insurance
Corporation.

THE OLD BIG STRONG BANK

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